

# Health & Social Services Committee

**HSS(2)-05-05(p.4)**

<b>Date</b>	Wednesday 13 April 2005
<b>Venue</b>	Committee Rooms 3&4, National Assembly for Wales
<b>Title</b>	Strategic Forward Work Programme - May 2005 to December 2006

## **Purpose**

1. The Committee is invited to agree the strategic forward work programme for May 2005 to December 2006.

Committee Service  
April 2005

## **HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME PART 1 : STRATEGIC FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME May 2005 to December 2006**

1. Standing order 9.9 requires subject committees to maintain a rolling programme of work covering periods of at least 12 months. The Strategic Forward Work Programme sets out the Committee's priorities for the coming 18 months. It is complemented by detailed programmes covering around three months at a time.

## **The Committee's Portfolio**

2. In accordance with s57(4) of the Government of Wales Act 1998, the Committee's portfolio follows that of the Assembly Minister:

- All aspects of the National Health Service in Wales, including general practice and primary care, *other than (i) oversight of the medical professions; (ii) policy on surrogacy, xenotransplantation\*, embryology and human genetics; and (iii) licensing of medicines. (These*

*matters are not devolved to the National Assembly).*

- Charges for NHS services, including prescription, dental and ophthalmic and optical charges.
- The provision of services in Wales to the mentally ill.
- All aspects of public health in Wales, including food safety.
- The regulation of poisons.
- The activities of the Food Standards Agency in Wales.
- Genetically-modified food (*but not the cultivation of genetically-modified crops - this is for the Minister for Environment, Planning and Countryside*).
- Oversight of the Audit Commission's activities so far as relating to the National Health Service in Wales.
- Policy on care in the community.
- Policy on the provision of social services for children, including the regulation of playgroups, activity centres and childminding.
- Oversight of the social services activities of local authorities in Wales including the issuing of statutory guidance.
- Oversight of

the Care Council for Wales;  
Health Professions Wales;  
the Wales Centre for Health;  
the Healthcare Inspectorate Wales;  
the Care Standards Inspectorate for Wales.

- Regulation of private care and nursing homes in Wales.
- Inspection of, and reporting on, the provision of social services by local authorities in Wales (via the Social Services Inspectorate for Wales).
- Adoption and fostering services in Wales (*but not adoption of children by UK residents abroad*).
- Cross-cutting responsibility for, health improvement, and older people and carers.

### 3. The Committee's Responsibilities are set out in Standing Orders :

"9.7. Each subject committee shall

- i. contribute to the development of the Assembly's policies within the fields for which the relevant Minister is accountable to the Assembly;
- ii. keep under review the expenditure and administration connected with their implementation; and
- iii. keep under review the discharge of public functions in those fields by public, voluntary and private bodies.

"9.8. Each subject committee shall also, within the relevant fields,

- i. advise on proposed primary, secondary and European legislation affecting Wales, including performing its functions under SO24;
- ii. provide advice to the Assembly Cabinet on matters relating to allocation of the Assembly's budget in accordance with Standing Order 21;
- iii. perform its functions under Standing Order 23(complaints);
- iv. perform any functions assigned to it under the Code of Practice on Public Appointments Procedure made by the Assembly under Standing Order 22; and
- v. consider matters referred to it by the Assembly within its fields."

## **The Committee's Aims and Objectives**

4. The Committee's aim is to scrutinise the policies of the Welsh Assembly Government and to monitor their implementation to ensure that the people of Wales have access to services to improve their health and provide health and social care when it is needed.

5. In reviewing and developing policy the Committee will make recommendations that will lead to high quality, cost effective services that are properly regulated and inspected.

## **The Committee's Priorities**

6. The Committee's strategic focus for the period of the forward work programme will be on the following issues which, together with its responsibilities under Standing Order 9.7 and 9.8, will be its priorities for meetings:

- Services for the mentally ill, especially for children and adolescents
- The implementation of the recommendations of the Review of Health and Social Care in Wales ("*The Wanless Report*")
- Reduction in hospital waiting times
- Social Care - Standards and Quality:

### Child Protection and The Care Standards Inspectorate

- Legislation

Primary legislation remitted by the Assembly  
The Older Person's Commissioner Bill

- Secondary Legislation as identified by the Committee for scrutiny. (*Current legislation identified at 1 April 2005 is appended*)

Policy Review:

- Complete work on the review of the National Service Framework for Mental Health – Standard 2: User and Carer Involvement.
- Topic for a major policy review to be agreed.
- The Committee will also undertake short scrutinies of the Assembly Government's policies, such as hospital waiting times and nursing services.

### Budget priorities

The Committee will monitor the Assembly Government's progress in the following areas which the committee identified as priorities for the 2005-06 budget:

- Mental Health National Service Framework;
  - Implementing "Fulfilling the Promises";
  - Implementing Informing Healthcare;
  - The Ambulance Service; and
  - Diabetes Services.
- Scrutiny of Assembly Sponsored Public Bodies (eg Care Council, Health Professions Wales, Wales Centre for Health).

### **The Statutory Schemes**

The Committee will also take account of the National Assembly's statutory schemes for relations with the local authorities and the voluntary sector, and the sustainable development scheme. The Committee will also have regard to the requirements of the Race Relations Act.

The Committee will consider a report of the Assembly Minister's meetings with the Voluntary Sector at least once a year in accordance with section 3.7 of the Voluntary Sector Scheme.

\* Xenotransplantation is the transplantation of tissue and organs between different species, and in particular the transplantation of animal tissue into humans.